

REVISED FLEXIBILITY IN POLICY AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS FOR CHILD CARE PROVIDERS

As North Carolina continues to remain in Phase 3, flexibility with some child care requirements will continue as outlined or with amendments; however, there are some requirements that will be **reinstated effective March 1, 2021**.

This includes:

- Inspections of Child Care Facilities –As of September 2020, in addition to responding to complaints and investigations of child maltreatment, DCDEE resumed annual compliance monitoring visits; however, the monitoring processes were adjusted to limit the amount of time in child care programs. (10A NCAC 09 .0201 & .1709)
- Training Requirements – Flexibility is no longer needed to give staff members more time to complete ITS-SIDS training. DCDEE and partner agencies agreed to temporarily offer ITS-SIDS training in a virtual format. (10A NCAC 09 .1102 and .1102(e))
- Child's Health Assessment and Child Immunization Records for Family Child Care Homes and Centers – Flexibility is no longer needed to give additional time for families to submit this documentation. The child care requirements allow families to submit within 30 days of enrollment. The Division of Public Health previously allowed an extension of temporary suspension of immunization and health assessment requirements, but this expired as of December 30, 2020. (10A NCAC 09 .1718, .2318(6)(b), & .3005)

DCDEE will continue to allow flexibility in the following child care requirements:

<u>RULE TOPIC</u>	<u>EMERGENCY DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>REGULATION</u>
On-Going Requirements for a License	The Division will not enforce required inspections under (a) and (b) to the extent such inspections cannot take place due to COVID-19.	10A NCAC 09 .0304(a) & (b)
Staff Qualifications	If child care facilities are required to add new staff, the Medical Report and Tuberculin (TB) Test Requirements may be temporarily waived to allow staff to begin work, provided they are not symptomatic, and all requirements can be completed within 60 days.	10A NCAC 09 .0701(a)
Staff Qualifications	Temporarily waiving the requirements to maintain information in an individual's staff record.	10A NCAC 09 .0703(c) & (d)
Nutritional Requirements	Temporarily waive the requirements to provide additional food to meet the USDA Meal Patterns for Child Care requirements when meals/snacks are brought from home.	10A NCAC 09 .0901
Staff Orientation	Flexibility amended regarding the time frame for new staff to complete orientation requirements. *As of March 1, 2021, all staff hired after March 1, 2020 through December 31, 2020, should have completed the orientation by now, but if not, must show verification of completion of orientation within eight weeks. *New staff hired after March 1, 2021, must show verification of completion of orientation within the first eight weeks of employment.	10A NCAC 09 .1101(a)

Training Requirements	<p>Flexibility amended to clarify time frame to complete CPR and FA and add flexibility related to completing specific required training in a virtual format.</p> <p>Provide six months for administrators and any child care provider to complete and/or renew CPR and FA certification. This flexibility is allowed <u>if at least one child care provider who has current CPR and FA certification is present while children are in care.</u></p> <p>Temporarily allow flexibility to complete DCDEE approved Playground Safety Training in a virtual format.</p> <p>DCDEE and partner agencies agree to temporarily offer ITS-SIDS and EPR training in a virtual format.</p>	10A NCAC 09 .1102 and .1102(e)
Family Child Care Home – Ongoing Training Requirements	<p>Flexibility amended to clarify time frame to complete CPR and FA renewals.</p> <p>Provide six months for operators and any additional caregiver to renew CPR and FA certification; if the operator/additional caregiver can show verification that they registered for a CPR/FA prior to their certification expiring and the course will be completed within the six months flexibility period.</p>	10A NCAC 09 .1703(a)(2) & (3)
Family Child Care Home - Nutrition Standards	Temporarily waive compliance with USDA Meal Patterns for Child Care requirements if availability and access to food components is impacted due to COVID-19, including if a parent brings in their own food for meals and snacks.	10A NCAC 09 .1706
Family Child Care Home - Daily Operations	Temporarily allow unlimited screen time usage periods for school-age children when working on school assignments.	10A NCAC 09 .1718 (b)
Two Through Five Star Rated License	The Division may have flexibility in timing and execution of star rated license and environment rating scale assessments. The Division is currently analyzing how to reintroduce assessments in a safe and healthy manner and will provide more details soon.	10A NCAC 09 .2817(a)&(b), .2828(a)&(b), .2830
NC Pre-K Attendance	Temporarily waive the requirement to contact parents for more than three consecutive absences when such absences are related to COVID-19.	10A NCAC 09 .3003

Reminder: These flexibilities were **reinstated effective May 11, 2020.**

- Activity schedules and plans – Flexibility no longer allowed for the completion and posting of activity schedules and plans for all child care programs. (10A NCAC 09 .0508 and 10A NCAC 09 .1718(a)(6))
- Activity areas – Flexibility no longer allowed in the requirements for activity areas and focus on providing age appropriate activities for children in care. Flexibility no longer allowed for additional screen time for preschool children except for NC Pre-K programs operating under a hybrid or full remoting learning schedule. As usual, screen time usage periods may be extended for school-age children when working on school assignments for all child care programs. (10A NCAC 09 .0510 and 10A NCAC 09 .1718(b))
- Staff/Child Ratio and Group Size – Flexibility no longer allowed for child care programs to operate using the minimum allowable staff/child ratios and group sizes. All child care centers are expected to meet the staff/child ratios and group sizes applicable to their program. (10A NCAC 09 .0713(a)). Contact your child care consultant if you have questions or concerns related to meeting staff/child ratios and group sizes.
- Indoor/outdoor areas – Temporary allowance no longer allowed for child care centers to exceed current indoor and outdoor space capacity requirements. (10A NCAC 09 1401(a), (f), 10A NCAC 1402(b) and 10A NCAC 09 .2504)
- School-Age Children- Age appropriate activities – Flexibility no longer allowed on age appropriate activities. However, as usual, screen time usage period may be extended for school assignments. (10A NCAC 09 .2508)

Thank you for supporting North Carolina and its families by providing vital care and services.